THE CHILD WHO COMES HOME

OH, DROPPING YOUR BAG IN THE FOYER AGAIN. CERTAINLY WOUND UP, AREN'T YOU?
I BOUGHT MARUYA PUDDING FOR YOUR SNACK TODAY.

BUT WASH YOUR HANDS, FIRST.
AND PRACTICE YOUR VIOLIN. THE TEACHER SAYS YOU'RE GETTING BETTER.

I'M HOME.
OH, HIDÉ!

YOU'RE EARLY. NO PRACTICE TODAY?
FINAL EXAMS START TOMORROW.
ALREADY? SEEMS LIKE YOU JUST FINISHED YOUR MIDTERMS.

HOW ABOUT SOME MARUYA PUDDING?
SURE.
SURE!

D-D-DUN
D-D-DUN
D-D-DUN
D-D-DUN

I'M HOME!

WELCOME HOME, YUU.

* KAGEZEN: A MEAL SET FOR AN ABSENT OR DECEASED IN THE JAPANESE TRADITION.

HIDÉ, I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D LIKE TO TAKE UP THE VIOLIN AGAIN, WOULD YOU?
HAVEN'T GOT THE TIME.
THERE'S BASEBALL.
AND THE HOMEWORK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL IS ROUGH.

AH...
TMP

NOW, YUU. NO PLAYING.
YOUR BROTHER HAS EXAMS TO STUDY FOR.

HMPH! CAN'T FIGURE OUT NUMBER FIFTY.
MY RANK MIGHT DROP THIS TIME, MOM.

YOU'LL BE FINE! YOU'RE YOUR FATHER'S BOY.
JJJJ
FIGHT ON, HIDÉ!

NOW, THESE ARE THE ONES WITH KIMCHI INSIDE, FOR YUU.

AND THESE ARE FOR HIDÉ.
SINCE HE DOESN'T LIKE SPICY FOOD.
CRO-QUETTES! CRO-QUETTES!
...THANKS.

IT WAS HIDÉ WHO STARTED PASSING IT AROUND.
YOU BOYS! THAT'S NOT FAIR!
THAT'S RIGHT!
ARE YOU SURE THE ANSWER TO THE LAST ONE WAS ZERO!?

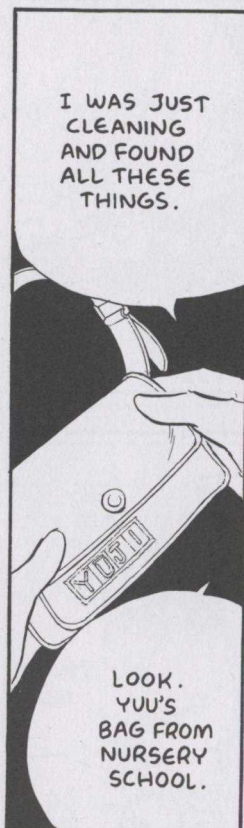
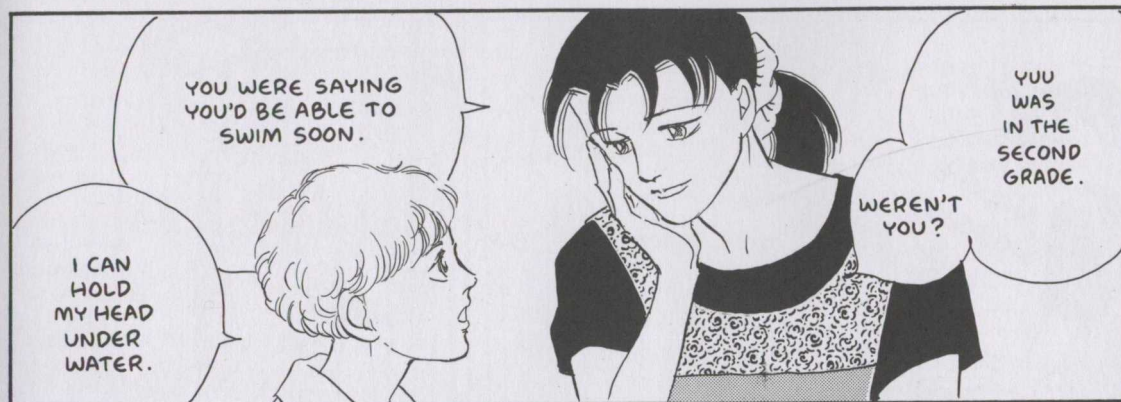
IT'S YOUR FAULT IF WE FAIL, HIDÉ.
IT'S JUST A GAME.

AND HE DESTROYS THE EVIDENCE!
GULP!

HIDÉ'S SO WEIRD.
HEAR THAT? YOU'RE WEIRD, HIDÉ!

FIGHT ON!

MOM?
I'M HOME.

OH.
WELCOME HOME, HIDÉ.

I WAS JUST CLEANING AND FOUND ALL THESE THINGS.
YUJI
LOOK. YUU'S BAG FROM NURSERY SCHOOL.

* O-BON (OR "BON"): THE JAPANESE BUDDHIST FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD HELD EACH AUGUST.

OKAY.

UM. MOM.
STARTING NEXT WEEK WE HAVE BASEBALL PRACTICE IN THE MORNINGS.

GOOD LUCK. DO YOU THINK YOU'LL GET TO BE A REGULAR MEMBER?
I DON'T KNOW. THERE'S THIS BIG KID NAMED OH-IWA.
HE'S REALLY GOOD.

MAMA

FIGHT ON, HIDÉ!

FIGHT ON!
CRACK

HFF
HFF
HFF

NEXT!
CENTER FIELD! YOU'RE TOO FAR IN!
HFF
HFF
FIGHT ON!

...
IT'S SO SMALL.

YOUR FATHER GAVE YOU THE NAME HIDÉ-AKI...
... BUT I WAS THE ONE WHO NAMED YUUJI.

YOU WERE ALWAYS SUCH AN EASY CHILD TO CARE FOR. BUT YUU WAS A REAL HANDFUL.
WITH HIS REDDISH HAIR... CRYING ALL NIGHT... ALWAYS CATCHING COLD...
I ALWAYS WORRIED ABOUT HIM.
ROLL
ROLL

NOW, YUU, DON'T MAKE A MESS.
LOOK AT THIS, MOM.

"CLASSICS FOR MOTHER AND CHILD".
OH, I REMEMBER THIS.
WE USED TO LISTEN TO IT ALL THE TIME, DIDN'T WE?
母と子のクラシック

YUU USED TO LOVE GRIEG'S "PEER GYNT". HE'D ACTUALLY CRY. HE'D LISTEN TO IT AND CRY.
HE INHERITED HIS MOTHER'S LOVE OF MUSIC.
HE WAS BECOMING SO GOOD ON THE VIOLIN.

BAMM
WHOA!
WATCH IT!

LET ME OUT!
STAY IN THERE, FAT ABÉ!
DON'T LET THE STOOL PIGEON OUT!

DON'T TRY TO COME OUT!
TMP
TMP
TMP

WHADDYA THINK YOU'RE DOING!?
BAM

WE WERE JUST PLAYING AROUND.
WHO WAS IT!?
ABÉ SAYS SOMEONE ALSO HID HIS TEXTBOOKS AND HIS SHOES!!
AND I KNOW ABOUT THE CHEATING, TOO. ALL RIGHT. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO HAVE YOUR PARENTS COME IN FOR A TALK!

HIDÉ

GO HOME!

OKAY.
THESE THREE ...

THE REST OF YOU ...
... WILL BE THE FIRST-YEAR REGULARS.

... PUT SOME MEAT ON THOSE BONES! OKAY! GIMME ANOTHER LAP!
OUR "LOSER LAP," HIDÉ!

HFF
FIGHT ON!

WELCOME HOME, EI-ICHIROH. I THOUGHT YOU'D BE HOME EARLIER.
SORRY. I STOPPED BY THE OFFICE.

HIDÉ! ...
HE'S NOT HERE!?

HM? WHERE'S HIDÉ? I THOUGHT HE WAS WITH YOU?
HUH...!?

WHERE DID HE GO!? THE HOSPITAL!?
ALSO, THERE WAS A CALL FROM THE SCHOOL.

R-R-R-RING

!
HIDÉ !?

I'M HOME ...

OH, HIDÉ-AKI!
DAD...!?

I GOT A CALL AT MY OFFICE SAYING YOUR MOTHER IS IN THE HOSPITAL.
SHE SPRAINED HER ANKLE WHILE SHE WAS SHOPPING.
WH- WHAT!?
I'M GOING TO TAKE HER A CHANGE OF CLOTHES.

WHERE!? I'M GOING, TOO!
YOUR AUNT MIEKO WILL BE HERE ANY MINUTE.
YOU STAY HERE.

BUT DAD, I WANNA GO SEE MOM!

...
IS THAT ANY WAY FOR A MIDDLE-SCHOOL STUDENT TO ACT?
THEY SAY YOUR MOM WILL BE HOME TOMORROW.
NOW YOU STAY HERE. AND WATCH THE HOUSE.

ANYONE HOME?

I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS, GRANDMA.
MY, EI-ICHI-ROH, YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GO TO THE TROUBLE.

HIDÉ IS...
TMP TMP
HIDÉ!

HIDÉ ...
T-TMP
Y-YOU'RE STILL IN BED!?

FLUMP!

I'M AFRAID THE WATER-MELON GAVE HIM DIARRHEA.
GRANDMA?
WOULD YOU EXCUSE US? I HAVE TO GIVE THIS BOY A TALKING TO.

OH.
EI-ICHIROH?
IS KIMIE THERE?

OH.
GRAND-MA, HELLO.
NO, KIMIE IS...

HIDÉ'S HERE AT OUR PLACE.

WH...!?
HIDÉ WENT ALL THE WAY TO MITO!?
WAS THERE A FIGHT OR SOMETHING? HE WON'T SAY A WORD.
I HAD HIM TAKE A BATH AND JUST PUT HIM TO BED.
水戸自治会

THAT CALL FROM THE SCHOOL. THEY WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT HIDÉ BULLYING AND CHEATING.
HIDÉ!?
HE PROBABLY RAN AWAY BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID OF BEING YELLED AT.

DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT?
IT'S NEWS TO ME.

HIDÉ?
HOW ABOUT SOME WATER-MELON?

YOU CAN STAY HERE, YOU KNOW. YOU'D BE LONELY AT HOME WITHOUT YOUR MOTHER THERE ANYWAY.

I BET YOU WISH
I WAS THE ONE
WHO HAD DIED,
DON'T YOU!?

WHA--!?

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
YUU
...

HIDÉ!

LEAVING THE HOUSE EMPTY AND RUNNING OFF LIKE THAT! WHAT ARE YOU POUTING ABOUT!?
WHAP
AND WHAT'S THIS ABOUT CHEATING AND THEN BEATING UP ON THE BOY WHO TOLD ON YOU!?
I'M ASHAMED OF YOU, HIDÉ!
YOUR MOTHER'S IN THE HOSPITAL AND YOU HAVE TO ADD TO OUR WORRIES?
YOU'RE IN MIDDLE SCHOOL NOW! YOU'RE THE OLDER BROTHER! USE YOUR HEAD!
FWUMP!

....

HIDÉ!
FAPP

NOOGIE
NOOGIE
NOOGIE
YOU SILLY BOY!!
IS THAT WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THINKING!?

YUU SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE ONE TO LIVE, SHOULDN'T HE!?
SQUEE
YUU!
STOP, YUU!!
SKREEEEE
WHAMMMM

I'M HOME!

HIDÉ!

OH, HIDÉ! I WAS SO WORRIED!
RUNNING OFF LIKE--
MOM! DIDN'T YUU JUST COME HOME!?

WHAT? YUU?
NO, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO CAME HOME.

BUT I JUST SAW HIM!
HIDÉ...

THAT'S ENOUGH.

YOU SILLY BOY...
中山
HIDÉ.

YUU STOPPED COMING HOME.

ALWAYS SAYING "WELCOME HOME, YUU" AT THE TIME HE USED TO COME HOME.
TALKING TO HIM... PRETENDING HE WAS HERE.
BUT I'M READY TO SAY GOODBYE TO YUU NOW.
I WON'T PRETEND HE'S HERE ANYMORE.

MOM, HOW'S YOUR LEG?
MY LEG'S FINE.
I'M SORRY.

I'M SORRY, HIDÉ. I'M SORRY. IT'S ALL RIGHT, NOW.
I'M SORRY. IT WAS MY FAULT.

...
COULDN'T YOU SEE HIM, MOM?
HE WAS HERE ALL THE TIME.

BUT... HE **WAS** HERE.

HE... HE **WAS?**
JUST NOW HE CAME HOME JUST BEFORE I DID.

...REALLY COMING HOME
ALL THAT TIME?
MAYBE MOTHER'S
LITTLE GAME...

...LED ME TO CREATE
A FICTIONAL YUU.

MAYBE I WAS
THE ONE...
CLANG CLANG
CLANG CLANG
...WHO WANTED
YUU TO COME
HOME SO
BADLY.

HIDÉ.

YUU...
I'M HOME.

...

MOM.
I'M HOME.

END